



Kentucky State University
Police Officer

Sirrethia Fox

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PHOTO BY JIM ROBERTSON

Officer Sirrethia Fox first came to Kentucky State University on a track scholarship in the early '90s — and decided never to leave. Now, a 10-year veteran of KSU Police Department and married for 12 years, this mother of two epitomizes community service and personal dedication. Fox's friendly disposition and desire for constant improvement makes her an asset to her department and a welcome image in her community.

I was the first to win a cross-country national championship for KSU. We went on to win a couple national championships after that. I have three championship rings from KSU.

I became an officer because I always thought I'd love to make a change within the community. But, other officers would say, 'We need you; you can run fast.' But I never thought it was about running and chasing down bad people, I just always felt like I wanted to make a change.

I find the trust within our community. I always go out and speak with folks and wave. If you can gain trust within your community, and they can see you're out speaking and being friendly and that you really care, there will always be positive feedback. I try to build trust with everybody. Even if it's the little old man driving down the road in his golf cart every day, I stop and ask him how his day is going.

The first day I met Chief (Stephanie) Bastin, I knew she was something special, and she was going to make this department great. She came in, took over and started making changes right away. And the changes she made were awesome, outstanding changes. When I realized this was going to be a good thing, I decided to stay and never regretted it. In the six years I worked here before she came, there were times I thought about going to other departments, but now there are times when people try to recruit me and I say, 'No, I'm not going anywhere. I love it right where I'm at.'

I remember when I first got into law enforcement always thinking this is a man's job. I used to be the only female officer, and I came to work looking like a Plain Jane — I was just one of the guys. Then when chief

and assistant chief came on board, and we got more female officers, I started to feel and be more like a woman. Many of the guys would be like, 'Hey, you look good today.' They started seeing the change in me, too.

The thing I like doing more than anything is working on and solving cases. Every time a case comes in, I snatch it up from the other officers. Especially those cases where I know I am going to have to dig, to look hard for evidence to find out who did this. It's like I am addicted to it. Sgt. Lane Crawley, who is retired from Georgetown Police Department, came here and he really has helped me strengthen my skills and learn the ropes of being a good detective. He says I already had it naturally, but he taught me a whole lot.

On a campus, when dealing with a lot of kids, you are setting an example — molding them to succeed in a bigger world once they get out there. You take them under your wing, and they are like your kids. What makes it so good is when you know you've made a difference in somebody's life.

The one thing that sticks in my mind the most is a young man who was so depressed he tried to take his own life. He had been to several counselors. He called one day when he was depressed and wanted to speak with me — and after I spoke with him, everything was alright. At the end of the day, I felt like I had accomplished something. That's when I realized if I can make a change in someone's life like that, I also can make a change in everybody else's lives on campus.

Everybody is equal, you treat everybody the same no matter what. I always was taught that by my father. That's what I try to do.

My dad was there for everything — every track meet, every volleyball game, every basketball game, no matter how good or bad we were. And if we were bad, he was trying to make us better. I think that is what stuck with me, even in law enforcement. I started

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out and I was alright, but I'm going to keep trying until I get better. Then I'm going to go from better to excellent.

I'm just going to always be me. Like every other officer out there, I don't come in with a cape on or an 'S' on my chest every day, thinking I'm some superhero. I just come to work to do what I was sworn to do and that's serve and protect the community. I live by that, and I will continue to do so. I took that oath 10 years ago and I'm going to continue to do that until the day I retire.

My 9-year-old and 4-year-old daughters are always portraying things I do, or acting like they are police officers. I remember my daughter coming to me saying she was going to be a police officer when she grew up. I was going to say, 'No, you're not.' But I got to thinking about it, and you know what, she would make a great officer because the things she does remind me of me. She's such a great kid — helping others already.

That's been a good trait with my family — it's always been about helping people. It's been a part of my life forever. My grandfather, in the Florida countryside, owned a farm. Every Saturday they would slaughter a hog and go to the garden and pick vegetables and then split it with the people in the countryside. That's just the way I grew up. We learned to share and help others, and that has stuck with me and helped me become a better police officer.

My husband is a truck driver, so sometimes I feel like I am a single mother. Usually he's home at least once through the week and he's home every weekend. Sometimes, it's stressful. But I have my work family. My chief says we have names for everybody — work sister, work brother. We have work husbands and work wives. It's crazy, but we love each other and that helps us get through the day.

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